Paradise Lost

Q1: Satan does not degenerate. He is degraded (Wedlock)

Q2: Satan has all the fascination of evil. Discuss?

Q3: Do you think that Satan achieves heroic dimensions in Paradise Lost Book 1

Q4: Comment on the statement “In Spite of Himself, He (Milton) was in deep sympathy with Satan, the great rebel of Heaven and the enemy of God”

Q5: Discuss the opinion that all talk about Satan being either a fool or a hero is misleading, for Milton’s problem in Paradise Lost is to take those qualities which the general imagination associates with Satan and work them in the stable poetic whole.

Q6: In this portrait of Satan, Milton is in some degree exposing and castigating all those false romantic notions of heroism as egotistical magnificence, the view that heroic energy in a bad cause is admirable.’ How far do you think the above view represents the true purpose behind Milton’s characterization of Satan?

Q7: The brief survey of Milton’s religious thought and feeling makes sufficiently absurd the romantic idea that he was of devil’s party without knowing it. Discuss?

Q8: There is an underlying theme of Paradise Lost which proves that Milton did not Sympathies with the devil?

Ans:

Satan is the most important character in paradise lost. Though the action of the poem turns round man’s first disobedience, yet the character that gives epic grandeurs to paradise lost is that of Satan. In fact, Milton partly expressed himself through Satan. He is the most heroic subject ever chosen for a poem and the execution is as perfect as the design is lofty. According to Addison, he is the most exalted and most depraved being. The reasons for opposing god almighty himself is said to be ambition, pride and love of supreme leadership. Egoism is the bottom of his life and actions. He knows in due course that god cannot be overcome either by men or by devils. Instead of resigning himself to the inevitable as most sensible people might think of doing, he resolves on eternal warfare, hatred ad opposition to god, just to vindicate his conquerable love of freedom, liberty and independence. Viewed in relation to god, whom he opposes, he is the weaker party and so doomed to failure. Being immortal, he is incapable of destruction, but he can offer battle to god in all possible ways and thus stand out above all else.

But viewed in relation to innocent man, whom he resolves to seduce, corrupt and turn against god himself, he is a villain, for just as the fight between him and god is one sided and unequal.

In Book 1, we see him in the moment of his greatest disaster. There is no lower
Point to which he could be pushed down by fate. We see him a fallen creator. He is stunned by his defeat and downfall and an object of terror and pity. Milton's first description of him is intended to impress us with his superhuman appearance and powers. He had great beauty, great intellect, great emotions and great physical daring. This was the personality of Satan before his degradation.

Milton's Satan is endowed with heroic qualities. The outstanding trait of his character is courage. He may be wrong headed but he has infinite courage in himself. As the poem, paradise lost begins, we find Satan in a hopeless situation. He and his companions lie dazed and stunned in the lake of liquid fire. Heaven is lost to Satan and his companions and they are doomed to live forever in the darkness of hell. But this gloomy prospect of the future does not fill Satan with despondency. When Beelzebub his lieutenant, tells him that their situation is hopeless. He replies:

"Fallen cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or Suffering"

Satan is determined not to be weak under any circumstances. Even in hell Satan discovers an advantage:-

"Better to reign in hell, than
Serve in Heaven"

Satan has great anxiety for his followers. It is the trait of a great general of an army, to think of the welfare of his followers even before he thinks of his own safety. He cannot forget that they had me this cruel fate because of their devotion to him. He sees their self sacrifice as heroic in its essence. So he is represented as shedding tears of sympathy for them tears such as angels weeps. This is a pathetic fallacy since angels cannot weep at all.

A great leader should have great qualities of character. He should have courage, resourcefulness and an indomitable will. Above all, he should be a man of action. Milton's Satan is endowed with all these qualities. Satan's greatest quality as a leader is his readiness to act under all circumstances he persuades the rebel angels to leave infernal and go with him to solid plain behind its shore. He encourages them to overcome their despondency and bravely face situation in which they are. He will live in hell as its rules rather then are a slave to god in heaven. It is man's mind which can turn heaven into hell and hell into heaven. As a leader Satan is ready and eager to assume his difficulties, responsibilities and dangers of leadership as well as its rights; ready to accept hazard as well as honor Satan was originally an archangel in heaven occupying a high place in the hierarchy of angels. He was proud, defiant and of in independent temper of mind. He would not submit to the authority of god he fought

against god, and was defeated and hurdled down to hell. The punishment was rigorous indeed, but the rigor of the punishment was matched by the extent of his pride and strength of his spirit. Defeat did not curb the independence of his spirit.

"What though the field be lost?
All is not lost; the unconquerable will.

He is inspired the fallen angels with new hope and courage, and his leadership [roused them from depth of despair into which they had fallen. No amount of torture could damp the brave spirit of Satan

"The mind is its own place and itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven"

He may have been defeated by the superior arms of god, but all is not lost. He would not under any circumstances submit to the tyranny of the almighty this courage and this indomitable spirit makes Satan unique figure in paradise lost Satan has many admirable qualities for example his power of endurance, his heroism and his indomitable refusal to admit defeat.

Self exaltation is the motive of all his conduct. Satan suffered from a sense of injured merit. Pride is the evil from which all other evils arise Satan says "we are ordained to govern, not to serve" even in defeat, he will never dream of submission. The fierceness of the punishment inflicted on him is mitigated by greater fierceness of his pride.

Paradise Lost tells us about never ending conflict between good and evil in the life of man, and Satan is thus the type of universal evil and wickedness.

There can be no doubt that Satan is meant be villain. He is throughout called name like "Arch-Fiend, Arch-Enemy," the author of all ill etc. his rebellion against god was due to pride and his desire to continue the war of envy. Revenge and love of evil. Satan embodies evil because he is the embodiment of disobedience to god. God allows him to work his dark design in order to give further scope for divine goodness and to bring worse punishment on him.

In the character of Satan, Milton has expressed his own pride, temper, love for liberty and heroic energy. The strength of the figure of Satan is due to the fact that the poet is expressing himself through Satan. Milton himself was proud, and had stood against the tyranny of the king and though his party had been defeated, he remained as courageous as Satan. Blake remarked that Milton was of the devil's party without knowing it. But it should be kept in mind that in the later books, Satan became a cunning spy and villain.

So we can say that he is not, the hero of paradise lost. Blake never means that Milton identifies himself with Satan. According to him, poetry is so emotional rather than rational. So a poet finds it easier to depict eve than good, it is in this sense that Milton is of the devil's party.

In the first two books, he is made a heroic figure. The identification of Milton with Satan is only partial. Milton is also Adam. Milton thought himself a sincere Christian.

Milton had Stan in him and wants to drive him out. It is not enough to say that Stan is the hero of the poem because he is brave and bold. But in the romantic age, Satan has been admired immensely even in the 20th century some critics are influenced by this romantic figure. Bagel hotly says that Milton's Satan was to him, as to us, the hero of his poem.

But as the poem proceeds, the character of Satan degenerates. Reaching the earth, he enters into a serpent and is completely degraded. As C.S. Lewis remarks, if from her o to general, from general to politician, from politician to secret service agent, and finally to a snake – such is the progress of Satan?

John peters of the opinion that degradation of Satan is due to the fact that Milton lost poetic fervor after two books. Though Satan represents evil, he has a greatness of his own. He is magnificent in his crime. The first two books of paradise lost depict the greatness and grandeur of Satan. Insipid of his final degradation, it is Satan's character that gives real epic quality to paradise lost.

Q1: Analyze Satan's speeches in book 1 of paradise Lost show that Milton does not intend us sympathize Satan.

Ans:

The speeches of Satan constitute the very height of poetic sublimity. They reveal his character a defiant rebel including in political oratory and rhetoric. Satan of book 1 paradise lost is one of the glorious examples of political leadership and political oratory. His speeches are the key to his character. He is the leader of the rebel angels in heaven and the uncrowned monarch of hell. Satan and his follower are deprived of happy fields where joy for ever dwells. There is a certain pathetic grandeur of injured merit in them which wins the hearts of his followers. Satan has now the task of retaining their loyalty and does so by his political oratory.

Satan is the first to recover from the stupor into which all the rebel angels fall. Son he notices his first lieutenant Beelzebub. He finds that he is much changed. So he makes cautious approach, for he is not sure whether his friend in a mood to blame him or he still loves him

Satan's speeches reveal pure Miltonic lyricism. His first speech to Beelzebub reveals the character of Satan – a defiant rebel and a great leader. He encourages and sympathizes with his followers with bold words and sentiments. Satan first takes pity on the change in his friend then he refers to their friendship in the destructive intersperse in heaven and in their present misery. He is ashamed to admit the might of god. But he will not allow it to change his mind .he has nothing but contempt for god who insulted his merits. It is a sense of injured merit that makes him to start war against the tyrant of heaven.

Satan accused god of gross injustice to him and justifies his revolt against him in heaven. Defeat and fear did not unnerve and he was firmly determined to pursue eternal war against god.

"What though the field is lost
All is not lost; the unconquerable will"

Satan admitted the fact of the superiority of the weapons of god which caused his defeat in the war in heaven. He also knew that he might become the victim of his wrath. Once again. He is proud, bold and revengeful. He has unConquerable will and courage. In one of his essays in “The Spectator”, Addison says that Satan’s first speech is one of the best things in Paradise lost.

Though the speech is one of high rhetoric’s, there is bareness; no suggestion of action at all to brood on revenge and hate. With his second speech, Satan sweeps off all doubts from his friend’s mind. Satan tells Beelzebub that weakness is an unpardonable crime on the part of immortals like themselves. He proceeds to explain to his followers that their defeat is not the end of their adventures. The real victory or defeat is psychological and in that field they are their own masters. They can take some pleasure. Opposing gods plans in all possible ways. God has only conquered their bodies but their minds are still their own. If the goodness and wisdom of god the entries to produce well out of our evil, we must make efforts to defeat that purpose and turn his good intentions to evil purposes. Milton here employs the theological idea of the irreconcilable opposition between good and evil. God is absolute goodness, while Satan becomes the personification of unrelieved evil.

This peepshows audacity and superb confidence of Satan. Through this speech Satan is trying to infuse fresh courage into his followers. His speech shows also a heroic quality.

“Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable
Doing or suffering; but of this be sure.”

In his third speech, Satan welcomes the dismal horrors of the infernal world. For him gel is as good place as heaven, for his mind remains unchanged place or time. He comforts himself with thought that it is best to be farthest off from god. Satan takes omen consolation from the thought that the ultimate cause of our joys and sorrows is our mind. In hell they are free from servitude. It is “better to reign in hell than serve in heaven”. This ringing in its melodramatic tone scarcely conceals mixture of bride and spite which h it expresses.

In his fourth speech, he addresses other angels with a resounding voice. He directly touches their ego by calling them, “princes”, warriors the followers of heaven. He instigates them to awake, arise or be forever fallen. Initially Satan sarcastically addresses his fallen angels and then he tries to revive their spirits his speech is so commanding that followers are roused out of their stupor.

In his fifth speech, Satan addresses the assembled angels. He is filled with pride to have so many comrades. It is impossible that these vast numbers are vanquished. They are all powerful and still there is very hope of regaining their native seat god has conquered them by use of force but such success. The only course open to them is war. He invites all of them to the great council. Satan is determined to combat with god to save his on pride. Satan makes a war like speech full of contradictions and absurdities. At last he appeals all his followers to continue his conflict.

“War then war must

Open understood be resolved”

Ans:

Milton is hero of paradise lost this theory has been formulated by Denis Saurat in his book Milton: man and thinker. Though Satan is Milton’s own creation and he has displayed a great force of poetry in him yet it seems that Milton throws himself personality